Using the CAS Standards for Program Assessment & Enhancement

Presented by

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Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)

Dan Bureau
University of Memphis
Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

• Describe the CAS standards
• Explain how the CAS standards can be used for program development
• Articulate how the CAS standards can be used for self-assessment
• Describe the CAS self-assessment process
• Explain how results from a CAS self-study can inform your practice
Quick Poll

• What is your level of experience with CAS?
  1. I am learning about CAS for the first time
  2. I have read or attended a presentation about CAS
  3. I have used the CAS Standards and Guidelines in my work but have not conducted self-assessments
  4. I have conducted self-assessments in my work using CAS materials
  5. I am a CAS expert and have used CAS materials extensively
Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

- Founded in 1979
- Promotion of standards in higher education
- Promotion of self-assessment in educational practice
- Consortium of 39 member organizations
- CAS Board of Directors comprised of representatives from member associations
- Consensus-oriented, collaborative approach
- 43 standards and self-assessment guides (SAGs)
New/Revised Standards in 8th Edition

- Campus Information and Visitor Services
- Campus Police and Security Programs
- Career Services
- Conference & Events Programs
- Counseling Services
- Fraternity and Sorority Advising Programs
- LGBT Programs and Services
- Parent and Family Programs
- Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Prevention Programs
- Transfer Student Programs and Services
- Undergraduate Admissions Programs and Services
- Veterans and Military Programs and Services
• Alcohol and Other Drug Programs
• Disability Resources and Services
• Housing and Residence Life Programs
• Master’s Level Student Affairs Preparation Programs
• Academic Advising Programs*
• Campus Media Programs
• College Honor Societies
• Commuter & Off-Campus Living Programs
• Dining Services
• Education Abroad Programs
• Financial Aid
• General Standards
• Orientation Programs*
• Service Learning Programs
• Student Conduct Programs
• Women Student Programs
General Standards

- Mission
- Program
- Organization and Leadership
- Human Resources
- Ethics
- Law, Policy and Governance
- Diversity, Equity, and Access
- Institutional and External Relations
- Financial Resources
- Technology
- Facilities and Equipment
- Assessment and Evaluation
Standards and Guidelines

Understanding Standards & Guidelines

Standards

Indispensable requirements

Achievable by any & all programs of quality

Appear in **bold** type

Use **must** & **shall**

Guidelines

Clarify & amplify Standards

Guide enhanced practice beyond essential function

Appear in **light-faced** type

Use verbs **should** & **may**
• Six Student Learning & Development Outcome Domains are a part of the CAS General Standards

• Stated expectation in the CAS General Standards that all functional area programs must place emphasis on identifying relevant learning outcomes and assessing their achievement by students
• **Knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application**
  – Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life

• **Cognitive complexity**
  – Dimensions: critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; and creativity

• **Intrapersonal development**
  – Dimensions: realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; and spiritual awareness
• **Interpersonal competence**
  – Dimensions: meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; and effective leadership

• **Humanitarianism and civic engagement**
  – Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences; social responsibility; global perspective; and sense of civic responsibility

• **Practical competence**
  – Dimensions: pursuing goals; communicating effectively; technical competence; managing personal affairs; managing career development; demonstrating professionalism; maintaining health and wellness; and living a purposeful and satisfying life
Applications for Standards: How do campuses use results?

• Measure program and service effectiveness
  – Enhance institutional self-studies
  – Prepare for accreditation
  – Establish credibility and accountability
• Design new programs and services
• Devise staff development
• Inform budget allocation
• Guide strategic planning
Applications for Standards: How do departments use results?

- Help to focus where time, energy, and resources should go
  - Identify better uses for funds
  - Consider what are the essential, non-negotiable functions for the department
  - Consider what are the secondary functions for the department
- Provide suggestions for communicating with students, faculty, staff, parents, etc.
- Shape professional & student staff training
- Develop learning objectives
Adapting CAS for your Environment

• CAS Standards and self-study processes provide for flexibility (even within the same campus)

• Some considerations for using CAS to fit your culture and environment:
  – Institutional Size
  – Institutional Type
  – Cross-functional areas
  – Multiple Sites
**What is a SAG?**

**Part 1. MISSION**
The primary goals of College Unions (CU) must be to bring campus constituents together, build campus community, support and initiate programs, provide services, and maintain facilities that promote student learning and development.

CU must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions. The mission must be consistent with the mission of the institution and with professional standards. The mission must be appropriate for the institution's student populations and community settings. Mission statements must reference student learning and development.

Students must be the principal constituents of the CU.

The CU must be an inclusive environment where interaction and understanding among individuals from diverse backgrounds occurs.

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<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply</td>
<td>Insufficient Evidence/Unable to Rate</td>
<td>Does Not Meet</td>
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<th>Rating</th>
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<td><strong>1.2</strong> The CU</td>
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## CAS Evaluation Steps

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<td>3-5 (program) to 8-10 (division) comprised of stakeholders including students</td>
<td>What would be necessary to meet standards</td>
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<th>2. Educate Team</th>
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<td>Self-assessment concepts &amp; principles</td>
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<td>Use self-assessment guides (SAG)</td>
<td>Implement the changes (and plan for next review cycle)</td>
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Sample Timeline

• By Feb. 15: Team Selection
• By March 15: Team Training
• Mar. 15-Apr. 30: Compile and Review Documentary Evidence
• May 1-June 15: Judging Performance
• July 15: Final Reports Due
Team Selection and Preparation

- Identify an individual to coordinate self-assessment
- Identify and invite members of the institutional community to participate
  - Team leader assigned according to Assessment Area
  - 1 staff member from elsewhere in student affairs
  - 1 staff member from outside student affairs
  - 1 faculty member
  - 1 student
- As a group, the review team should examine the standards carefully before implementing the review
### CAS Evaluation Steps

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<td>1. Assemble Team</td>
<td>Assemble a team of 3-5 (program) to 8-10 (division) stakeholders, including students.</td>
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<td>2. Educate Team</td>
<td>Educate team on self-assessment concepts &amp; principles.</td>
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<td>5. Prepare Descriptive Report</td>
<td>Prepare a descriptive report documenting how well standards are met.</td>
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<td>6. Close the Loop</td>
<td>Close the loop by implementing changes and planning for the next review cycle.</td>
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Judging Performance

• Collect and document evidence of program
  – Use relevant data and related documentation
  – Routinely to collect and file relevant data that can be used to document program effectiveness over time
• Review the portion of a SAG you have been provided
• Develop a plan for gathering data to answer the assessment tool’s questions
  – Devise a list of items that might tell you whether you are meeting the standard
Documentary evidence to support evaluative judgments

- **Student Recruitment and Marketing Materials**: brochures and other sources of information about the program, participation policies and procedures, and reports about program results and participant evaluations

- **Program Documents**: mission statements, catalogs, brochures and other related materials, staff and student manuals, policy and procedure statements, evaluation and periodic reports, contracts, and staff memos

- **Institutional Administrative Documents**: statements about program purpose and philosophy relative to other educational programs, organizational charts, financial resource statements, student and staff profiles, and assessment reports
Documentary evidence to support evaluative judgments

- **Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Data**: needs assessments, follow-up studies, program evaluations, outcome measures and methodologies, and previous self-study reports

- **Staff Activity Reports**: annual reports; staff member vitae; service to departments, colleges, university, and other agencies; evidence of effectiveness; scholarship activities, and contributions to the profession

- **Student Activity Reports**: developmental transcripts, portfolios, and other evidence of student contributions to the institution, community, and professional organizations; reports of special student accomplishments; and employer reports on student employment experiences
Ratings and Reports

- A two-tiered (individual and group) judgment approach to determine the extent to which the program meets the CAS Standards is suggested
  - The self-assessment team and, if desired, the functional area staff members individually should rate each criterion measure using separate copies of the CAS Self-Assessment Guide
  - This individualized rating procedure is then followed by a collective review and analysis of the individual ratings
- The individual ratings should be reviewed and translated into a collective rating; then the team is ready to move to the interpretation phase of the self-assessment
Ratings and Reports

• Interpretation incorporates discussion among team members to ensure that all aspects of the program were given fair consideration prior to a final collective judgment
  – Persistent disagreements over performance ratings may call for additional data collection
• After the team review is completed, a meeting with administrators, staff members, and student leaders should be scheduled for a general review of the self-assessment results
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• Action Plan includes the following elements:
  – Actions required for the program to meet all standards
  – Areas that need follow-up because they are less than satisfactory
  – Resources necessary for program enhancements
  – Timeline and deadline
  – Person responsible for completing the work
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Strategic Action Plan

• Make CAS part of your strategic planning process
  – Full review of programs every 3-5 years
  – Conduct mini-reviews between years; gather information between larger-scale reviews
  – Use CAS findings and data to inform future strategic planning you do
Using CAS to start Strategic Planning Cycle

- Prep for Strat./CAS Program Review (Yr 0-1)
- Strategic/Program Action Plan (Yr 1)
- Data Gathering Interim Reviews (Yr 2-5)
- Action Plan Enabled (Yr 2-5)
- CAS Program Review (Yr 4)

If a SAP already is in place, then CAS just becomes part of that process.

Maintaining timely, consistent and accurate data is crucial to having good results.
### CAS Evaluation Steps

1. **Assemble Team**  
   3-5 (program) to 8-10 (division) comprised of stakeholders including students

2. **Educate Team**  
   Self-assessment concepts & principles

3. **Compile & Review Evidence & Conduct Rating**  
   Use self-assessment guides (SAG)

4. **Complete Report & Action Plan**  
   What would be necessary to meet standards

5. **Prepare Descriptive Report**  
   Document how well standards are met

6. **Close the Loop**  
   Implement the changes (and plan for next review cycle)
Successes and Challenges

• What have been successes with CAS?

• What have been challenges with CAS?

• What advice to you have for using CAS standards?
For More Information

- Visit [www.cas.edu](http://www.cas.edu)
- Individual Functional Area Self-Assessment Guides (SAGs)
- CD with SAGs and Standards
  - E-Learning Course on Conducting a Self-Assessment
- Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Developmental Outcomes (FALDOS) (2006)
- CAS Statements
  - Characteristics of Individual Excellence
  - CAS Statement of Shared Ethics